

out of SCHOOL



HACKNEY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

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INTRODUCTION

There is nothing that especially qualifies the police more than any other group in society to teach five a side football, disco-dancing, road safety, law or even not to go with strangers. Alternative non-racist agencies exist in all these areas if schools want outsiders to develop these and other areas of the curriculum. The Police insistence that they be allowed to present to children these parts of the curriculum has an ulterior motive of control and intelligence gathering. Given the proven institutional racism of the Police we should not allow them access to our schools.

Hackney Trades Council, Hackney Council, Hackney Black Peoples' Association and the Colin Roach Support Committee all have a policy of breaking links with the police. We agree we can have no dialogue with the police until they tackle their institutional racism.

Teachers in many Hackney schools have operated our policy for a number of years. It is now time to spread the case for no police in schools and make it part of each school's anti-racist policy. Once the school NUT union group has voted on the policy it should be taken to a full staff meeting, the parents and Governors and, in secondary schools, to the school students for endorsement. In this way whole sections of the community will be sending a clear message to the police that they will not have our consent to come into our schools and that they must become accountable. They must start by tackling racism in the force.

Hackney is an area with a multi-ethnic population, run down, poverty-stricken with very high levels of unemployment especially among black youths.

As teachers trying to overcome these disadvantages and get the best for our pupils and the best from them, it is impossible for us to retain the confidence of black parents and pupils if we are seen to be allowing the police access to our schools and classrooms.

We cannot accept that the police have any legitimate role in our schools. The commitment of the Metropolitan Police to visit every classroom once a year can only be viewed as a cynical PR exercise, while at the same time in the community and on the streets Instant Response squads operate with a heavy hand towards all black people.

As teachers and trade unionists we find ourselves unable to accept the level of racism found throughout the Metropolitan Police. The ILEA and the NUT have made racist discrimination and remarks by any teacher disciplinable, both under the staff code and union rules. Despite Lord Scarman's report, in the wake of the Brixton uprising, recommending that the Metropolitan Police do the same and make racist remarks and behaviour a disciplinable offence the Home Secretary, the Police Federation and Sir Kenneth Newman have rejected this recommendation. Teachers, like all other predominantly white groups in our society, have had to take active steps to combat and outlaw racist behaviour, practices and ideas throughout the curriculum. This process has hardly begun but there is at least a commitment. The Police have shown no such willingness even after the Policy Studies Institute Report clearly documented systematic racist and sexist behaviour and remarks throughout the Metropolitan Police.



NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS

HACKNEY TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

HACKNEY NUT PRESS STATEMENT ON POLICE IN SCHOOLS

After the death of Blair Peach in 1979 the association was so disturbed by the Metropolitan Police cover-up of his murder that we resolved that we did not want the Police in our schools.

As Mr Simons, a local teacher and NUT member of ten years standing and a friend of Blair Peach, pointed out...

'Blair has been largely forgotten by the media but his friends and colleagues have not forgotten him. He was a very good teacher and well respected by the East London community. I will not forget that he was murdered by an unnamed policeman who may still be a member of the Police force.'

We were also alarmed at the time at the increasingly para-military nature of the Police and in particular the activities of the Special Patrol Group. There have been strong demands from many unions and the TUC to disband the SPG to no avail.

We oppose the Police promoting their image of themselves to children in schools. Their teaching of road safety is quite unnecessary because Hackney Council employ people to teach road safety. We of course believe that individual policemen often have an important role for small children who are lost or in trouble, and believe that children should continue to see them in this way and be able to talk to them in time of need. But we feel that small children are quite capable of understanding the dual role of the Police: the lifeline and the racist. As many children have experienced the more worrying aspects of Police activity either directly or via elder brothers and sisters*.

The Police in inner city areas like Hackney are racist. If we are to maintain credibility with many of our black pupils and parents then we cannot be seen to be associated with the Police.

This policy was re-affirmed in December 1981 when Hackney Police arrested and assaulted a black mother and two daughters - the Knight family. This was one of many such incidents in Hackney. Others include the wrongful arrest and assault on the White family who got over £50,000 compensation and the wrongful arrest of Newton Rose for murder.

Other incidents affect children directly. These include the landing of a police helicopter in a school playground without warning when they were looking for thieves, or twelve and thirteen year old black children out of school for their lunch break being stopped on a number of occasions and made to stand spreadeagled against the wall, by the SPG, while searched.

Recently some black school girls were arrested on a bus in school time and were not allowed to see their teacher.

Our policy was reaffirmed again after the release of the racist crime figures last March by the Metropolitan Police.

The Scarman report on Brixton called for the Police to outlaw racist practice and behaviour in the police force. This was rejected both by the police and the government.

We say that if the Police will not take on their own racism Hackney teachers should have nothing to do with them.

This is not to say individual police are all racist rather that the way they are organised and operate is racist.

The policy of the HTA is for our members to discuss and adopt democratically in each school. A number of schools NUTs have adopted the policy and effectively stopped the police coming into their schools on all but legal matters.

The policy is one of protest and non-cooperation and raises in sharp focus the racism of the Police.

HACKNEY TEACHERS ASSOCIATION NUT 23rd July 1982.

*Similarly police taking social or community studies in secondary schools is not acceptable.

In 1979 the Hackney branch of the National Union of teachers (HTA) started a policy of non-co-operation with the police. The immediate cause of this was the murder of a teacher, Blair Peach, by the police while he was on an anti-racist demonstration. The teachers also had another reason for not supporting the police — they had become aware of the distrust and suspicion which many black children and their families felt for the police. This was particularly so in Hackney where the local police force has a brutal reputation and where black families have learned to their cost the police will not protect them from racial harassment and attack.

Subsequently, the Metropolitan Police policy of visiting every classroom once a year put increasing strain on the trust between pupils and teachers.

The brutality of the police, which is felt daily by black residents of London, frequently spills over into the schools. In one notorious incident in March 1981 the police responded to a hoax 999 call from a North London School in Archway by arriving with five police cars, a helicopter and a dog van and meting racial abuse and violence on black children. Teachers who tried to stop it were told not to 'interfere' and to mind their own business. Such events have typified police behaviour for years. As if to underline this fact, in October of 1984 this same police station went to the same school because a black child there had been behaving in a disruptive way. A vanload of police arrived in full riot gear to arrest the child. While they were there they made such abusive comments as 'This is what to expect from the animal farm.'

It is obvious that teachers cannot allow such events to occur. Teachers are supposed to take the place of parents when children are in school.

In fact in common law teachers are in 'loco parentis'. If they are to do that job properly, then, under present circumstances, they have to protect children *from* the police, and they have to make sure that any contact which children do have with the police takes place only when absolutely neces-

sary and with full and prior knowledge of the children's parents or guardians.

In our view, following this policy is the only way of ensuring an environment conducive to learning.

This policy of not co-operating with the police in schools therefore came into being because of what teachers learned about the police in Hackney and, most importantly, what they learned about the police from the everyday experience of their pupils. A number of recent studies have lent support to this policy.

For example, the Policy Studies Institute report on the Metropolitan Police dramatically underlines what has been going wrong with the police. They found that 70% of West Indians in vehicles were stopped and searched without sufficient reason, compared with 49% of whites and 29% of Asians. Of those on foot, 66% of West Indians were stopped without reason compared with 32% of whites and 23% of Asians. Terms such as 'monkeys', 'spooks' and 'coons' were widespread both in private conversation and on police radio. The report commented that, 'there can be few other groups in which it is normal, automatic and habitual to refer to black people as coons and niggers and so on'. It notes that on the protest march following the Deptford fire racist comments abounded: some described the march as 'hundreds of rampaging niggers'. Another said it had been 'a defeat although I managed to hit a nigger in the head'.

A number of people like to hold the comforting view that although racism is widespread in the force things are different at the top; that a real attempt is being made to clean up the Met. The present leader of the Met, Sir Kenneth Newman, put an end to such illusions when he gave an interview to the *American Police Magazine* in 1982, a few months before his appointment. 'In the Jamaican,' he informs us, 'you have a people who are constitutionally disposed to be anti-authority', (quoted *Daily Mirror* 30/6/82).

No wonder then that when a researcher investigated attitudes amongst police trainees at the Peel Centre, Hendon, he found racism prevalent. For example, the essays written by trainees were typified by such passages as, 'Quite frankly I don't particularly have any liking whatsoever for Wogs, nig nogs and Pakies. They come into Britain take up our homes our jobs and our resources and contribute relatively less to our once glorious country. They are, by nature, unintelligent and can't at all be educated sufficiently to live in a civilised society of the Western world. It is my opinion that they themselves would be better off living in their native lands so send them packing, carpet bags, funky music, curries, all their relatives and stereo transistor radios'.

It is a pity that the lecturer who exposed this, John Fernandez, did not get the support of his national union, NATFHE, and as a result lost his job. If teachers behaved and expressed themselves in the same manner as the police, they would be sacked and expelled from their union. None of this is true of the police who are accountable only to themselves, despite any recent cosmetic changes. Even Lord Scarman's recommendations for an independent complaints procedure were rejected by the Home Office and the Police Federation. The police remain their own judge and jury — they are not accountable.

The police are a blatantly racist force and this is true, quite literally, from top to bottom.

There is not much sign that anything very much is changing. Last year the senior Inspector for Race Relations for the Metropolitan Police Force had to resign because he made what he referred to as a 'slip of the tongue' and referred to black people at an annual police conference as 'nig nogs'. We know of many local instances of similar behaviour. One

Headmaster of a local Primary School was invited two Christmases ago by the community relations department of the local police force to a Christmas party. He had not been there more than half an hour before he was astounded to hear the community liaison officers getting into the swing of things by cracking a stream of racist jokes. This racism and brutality in the police force is bound to increase as they attempt to enforce the increasingly unpopular policies of the state. For example, every section of the police force nationally has been used to fight the miners and there they have been learning and using increasingly brutal methods. In the same way, the police are becoming increasingly active in the harassment and deportation of large numbers of black people.

In Hackney we have had direct experience of this. A Turkish family, the Hasbudaks, have recently been deported. The family's two children, Senep and Fatih, were born and had only lived in this country. Their parents were served with a deportation order. In the event, the school to which the Hasbudak children went, William Patten, in Hackney, took the side of the Hasbudaks as part of the school and ILEA's anti-racist policy. The campaign was supported by the children, teachers, parents and governors.

The school joined the battle with the Home Office for the family to stay, during which time they went into hiding. The police then harassed the whole school over a long period — surveillance by phone-tapping, interfering with mail, police stake-outs of the school and helicopter observation of the playground. Nursery age children were questioned by the police. Despite the building of a large and influential campaign, the police managed to trick Mr Hasbudak into picking up a phoney package at a post office, captured him, and deported the family. In Turkey the family is without employment and living in destitution.

"Blacks in Britain"

The Blacks are here and there is nothing we can do about it, I'm not saying I'd want to do anything against ^{because} I have got a lot of black friends, but not many. Obviously I disagree with the black youths who came here to live and then start fighting in riots and smashing up areas where I live, but to stop them we have to view their reasons for doing this mindless violence. Every time there is a case usually poorer living conditions, poorer pay and the usual discrimination which is pretty bad since we're supposed to be living in a civilized society.

I have a person brother-in-law who has lived here since he was 15 away from any of his family and has obviously faced a lot of prejudice and ~~seen his chance~~ I now, through him, that it is like to feel hated. I personally would like to remove this prejudice from the police force and quickly because I have had first hand experience of police being prejudiced.

Another view is that I'd personally like to kick the heads in of all the coders who are prejudiced yet have never met a coloured black and just go along with their mates, and simply use the colour as a way of separating them from use and using them as scape-goats. It is not their fault that they are easily easily adapt to our working conditions and that the Britains can't.

The black people in Britain claim that they are British with the help of words e.g. I've lived in Britain all my life and so has my mum. This is just an excuse a load of junk in my mind because white people who live in, say, Mozambique are not considered to be part of the country. Blacks are let off to much by this. I mean a police ^{officer} arresting a black person may be called Racial Prejudice.

If the blacks were deported back to Africa or wherever they came from there would be less unemployment and therefore more money for the Government to use for creating jobs. My general opinion towards the blacks is very low but has been lowered even still by the trouble they started in Tottenham and Brixton. Just putting it bluntly 'kick them out'.

Blacks in Britain are a pest. They come over here from some tin-pot banana country, where they lived in huts and worked the fields for cultivating rice and bananas, coconuts & tobacco, and take up residence in our already over-crowded island.

They never really seem to work at a legal job (except as doctors) but seem to exist off springing off the welfare state to which decent taxpaying white-law abiding citizens like myself contribute to by working hard at work 8 hrs/day - 5 days a week.

Quite frankly I don't particularly have any liking what so ever for wogs, niggers and Pakies. They come into Britain take up our homes, our jobs and our resources and contribute relatively less to our once glorious country.

They are, by nature, unintelligent and can't at all be educated sufficiently to live in a civilized society of the Western world.

It is my opinion that they themselves would be better off living in their native lands & packing carpet-bags - I. all their relatives.

The amount of blacks allowed into this country was too much. They all are over here and took money off the government, they took social security, went out with white women and took the white man's job. Some blacks are respectable but the majority cause a lot of trouble. Not perhaps their fault, they live in shanty areas one reason why they do perhaps cause trouble. That is probably the only area that they are accepted. They receive a lot of hassle from white people because a white man doesn't like a black man keeping him out of a job. The fact is that they are now not a minority but a separate group of resentful people. They are a big enough unit to now fight back at the white onslaught, and consequently they were a big factor in last summer's riots. It makes me gringe when I see a black bloke going out with a white woman, what the attraction to a black male is (blackmail? get it?) I don't know. England is a traditionally white country and that is how it shall stay. The blacks must accept that if they are to live in this country they must fall in line under white British dictatorship and not try and run the country themselves from the backstreet.



WHICH IS THE REAL
FACE OF THE POLICE?



Police raid on factory is condemned

A RAID by police and immigration officers on a Richmond Road clothing factory was condemned by angry councillors on Wednesday night.

Hackney Council unanimously passed an emergency motion expressing its concern about blanket raids on factory premises and workplaces, which they say is creating an atmosphere of fear and anxiety among ethnic groups in the borough.

Council leader Hilda Kean has

written a letter to Hackney police commander Keith Hunter asking a series of questions about the raid, in which it was alleged that workers were asked questions about their political affiliations.

SCARED

Hackney anti-deportation campaigner Alok Biswas said: "It is hard to gather detailed information about raids because the police will not talk to us and black people are scared to come forward. These raids threaten the safety of all ethnic

groups in the borough — our human rights are threatened."

Hackney Police Commander Keith Hunter confirmed that the raid had taken place, and said that six officers and four immigration officials had been involved.

"The police took no part in questioning the workers, but we have a duty to assist the immigration officers during the operation and to preserve the peace," he said.

Five workers were detained by the police, and two were subsequently charged.

The Commander said: "The raid

on Richmond Road was the first large scale combined operation involving the police and immigration officials since 1982."

But Hackney Council Chair Brynley Heaven said: "It is patently absurd to say that these things happen only once in a blue moon. The Hasbudak case last year brought home just how much of this is going on."

And anti-deportation campaigner Dave Owen said: "Turkish and Turkish-Cypriot workers tell me that these raids are very common and usually take place in the Spring."

New tactic to veil over immigration procedures?

A **SERIOUS** new departure in immigration policing methods, allegedly involving people being persuaded to leave the country 'voluntarily', appears to have been disclosed by tactics used in a raid this month on a factory in London's Hackney.

Local council leaders and MPs and Hackney Anti-Deportation Campaign (HADC) have already strongly criticised the operation, on 2 April, in which 'between 20 and 30' police and immigration officers descended on the Directmate clothing factory in Richmond Rd ostensibly to arrest two named people who weren't in fact there.

A number of other people, mainly Turkish Cypriots, were taken away. Police say that six people were involved. But according to other workers at the factory it was at least ten.

One of the six who are accounted for says he was questioned about his political affiliations. Another was taken away by the immigration officers — he's thought to have been removed to Cyprus. But there's most concern over four other people who weren't at the factory when it re-opened two weeks later and haven't been seen since the raid.

According to HADC, they left the country 'voluntarily' under pressure from the police. If it's true then the tactic is a serious development in immigration policing methods. As the law stands an immigrant who admits to lying when he entered the country counts as an illegal immigrant and can be summarily removed with no appeal possible.

Given the choice between a confession followed by quick removal, or prosecution followed by deportation (perhaps being locked up in the meantime), many immigrants understandably choose the former. Nationals of some countries are keen to get outside police stations as soon as possible. If immigrants are now being offered 'voluntary' departure with no awkward paperwork, then scrutiny of police and immigration service behaviour will become almost impossible.

Brian Sedgemoor and Ernie Roberts, MPs for Hackney, are taking the allegations very seriously and are writing to immigration minister David Waddington to ask for a full explanation of the events of 2 April.

Jolyon Jenkins

Last year there were 918 deportations. Every year there are more and more. Most of these cases involve families with children and so the effects of deportations will be felt in the schools.

As a consequence of taking such a stand, teachers themselves have been subjected to police attention. One member of Hackney NUT who had been very active on the Hasbudak campaign went as a delegate on a miners picket at Mansfield. On his way back to the coach, long after any confrontation had finished, he was set upon by a group of policemen dressed in full riot gear who beat him up and left him unconscious on the ground. He missed his coach back to London and when he eventually got back by train, had to spend two days in hospital. This event seemed a bit of a mystery until we realised that police from Stoke Newington were amongst those who had been drafted to the picket. It is difficult not to conclude that they took the opportunity to settle scores with a local teacher who they knew to take the side of deportees.

Let us look in a bit more detail at some of the incidents that have occurred in London schools.

In one school the police got from the school the names and addresses of all the 'black boys in the first year. They also asked for descriptions. Acting on this information, two plain clothes officers subsequently picked up an eleven year old boy and took him to the police station for questioning. Only later did they contact his mother. The boy was innocent. In our opinion, it is quite out of order that the police should have such direct access to information about children without their parents being aware of it, and it is outrageous that a boy can be picked up by the police in this way without his parents being made aware of it prior to the event.

At an infant school, the headmistress called in the police to deal with four black children between the ages of four and six, because they had money on them which she suspected 'they should not have'. It is a matter of considerable concern that police should have any dealings at all with children that age, and incredible that a Headteacher did not feel able to tackle the problem herself.

A teacher from Hackney Downs School witnessed twelve and thirteen year old boys in their lunch-hour being stopped, spreadeagled and searched, in their school uniforms, by an SPG squad.

In such cases, the introduction of the police is not only a matter of concern at the time, but also raises the problem of false accusations remaining on both police and school file to blight a student's subsequent career. For example, in Edith Cavell School a boy was accused of the theft of a wallet and the police were involved in the investigation without the child's mother, his only parent, being informed. Later he was exonerated of any blame for the affair. During the course of the investigation the head told his mother that they could not give her any details of the police investigation as *the police had instructed them not to*. After the boy was cleared, his mother spent a long time trying to establish, with the greatest difficulty, that no reference to the disproven allegations existed either on his school record or in any police record. This demeaning situation would never have occurred if the mother had been informed *prior* to the police being called in and if the schools had an open record policy.

At another local school, a year earlier, a member of staff had intervened when some boys from the school were being questioned and frisked just outside the school premises. When the teacher intervened the police became abusive towards him, arrested him, took him down to the station and charged him with assault. He was found innocent in court, but events such as these give white teachers a glimpse of the everyday experience of many of their black students. An experience borne out by the CRE report cataloguing the cases of 46 black people wrongfully arrested in Hackney.

RACIAL HARASSMENT ON HOUSING ESTATES

The final report of the GLC Police Committee panel of enquiry into racial harassment on local authority housing estates states that:

- attacks were not taken seriously
- victims were treated with suspicion
- some staff members may have sympathised with the views, if not the methods used by the attackers
- several new policies aimed at dealing with racial harassment have not been implemented
- the level of harassment against Bengalis in Tower Hamlets is increasing
- monitoring of attacks by staff was negligible
- tenants lacked confidence in the staff, and therefore reported few attacks — for example, the housing department had no records of racial incidents at Shadwell Gardens estate, but the Tenants association has records of 111 incidents between June '81 and February '82, and 110 for the rest of '82
- on many occasions housing officers would refuse to take action because they believed Bengalis were dishonestly trying to get a transfer

"London Housing" No. 35 Dec 1983

POLICY STUDIES INSTITUTE REPORT

The P.S.I. report found that 70% of West Indians in vehicles were stopped and searched without sufficient reason, compared with 49% of Whites and 29% of Asians. Of those on foot 66% of West Indians were stopped without reason compared to 32% of Whites and 23% of Asians.

Terms such as 'monkeys', 'spooks' and 'coons' were widespread both in private conversation and on personal radio. The report says 'there can be few other groups in which it is normal, automatic and habitual to refer to black people as coons, niggers and so on.' It notes that on the protest march following the Deptford fire, for example, racist comments abounded: 'someone described the march as hundreds of rampaging niggers'. Another said it has been 'a defeat although I managed to hit a nigger in the mouth.'

West Indian World 23.11.83 p.2.

COLIN ROACH

Colin Roach, the 21 year old black man found dead in Stoke Newington Police Station on 19th January 1983 killed himself, a jury decided in June (Majority verdict 8 to 2). The verdict was dismissed by the Roach family and their supporters.

After the inquest the jury wrote to the Home Secretary, Leon Britton, criticising the police handling of the case, and in particular the treatment of Roach's parents after their son's death. The jurors said they were 'deeply distressed' by police behaviour.

By early May 1,000 people had been arrested as a result of demonstrations organised by the Roach Family Support Committee, including James Roach (Colin's father) who was arrested in March but acquitted in May.

Race and Immigration No. 158, August 1983.

Members of the National Union of Journalists complained at police behaviour towards photographers on the marches.

They allege obstruction, harassment, and assault by the police.

'The Journalist' February 1983.

P.S.I. REPORT

The Policy Studies Institute Research states that one third of all stops made by police were illegal because there was no 'reasonable suspicion' for stopping 'suspects'.

About 1.5 million stops are made each year, but only about 1 in 12 leads to the detection of an offence.

West Indian youth figure high in the those-to-be-stopped group.

The P.S.I. found that racial prejudice was pervasive and that the Met was pre-occupied with ethnic differences. Racist language was even used in radio messages.

Labour Herald 25.11.83 pp. 8 & 9.

These cases, and many similar ones, raise issues of grave concern to parents and teachers; and to the black community in particular because they are most often the victims of police malpractice and racism. We can pinpoint some particular matters for concern;

- 1 Despite the ILEA Guidelines, parents are not always informed when the police are called in or given access to school files.
- 2 The lack of information available to parents about those occasions when the police are *routinely* in schools. This now extends to disco dancing, five a side football, the showing of police films and free lectures on 'child development' and 'animal appreciation'!
- 3 The freedom with which police enter school premises — staff rarely know when or why they are there and, unfortunately, few staff feel free to challenge their presence.
- 4 The intimidating atmosphere that police can produce in a school, both for children and staff. One example is police getting in touch with the parents of children who expressed hostile attitudes during a police presentation in school.

Given the present situation in Hackney, with police behaving in an openly racist fashion, teachers who do not challenge their presence in school are put in the position of being seen by the students as colluding with the police. This inevitably causes distrust and confusion which is damaging to education.

So far we have argued that the police should be kept out of schools because they are racist and accountable to no-one but themselves. **The HTA is not opposed to police as such — it is opposed to the type of police force that is steadily emerging.** However, the police and their supporters have argued for some time that they have an important educational role to play in our schools. They claim that they are well-placed to educate children in those aspects of social life where the law is involved — matters that range from crime across to social problems such as child-battering.

This claim has only been made recently. Until a few years ago nobody thought it necessary to have a regular police presence in the schools to teach about the law any more than they thought it necessary to have doctors involved in the school curriculum to teach about hygiene.

So, what do the police actually *do* when they come into school to play a formal educational role? Recently the Hillingdon Legal Resource Centre commissioned an intensive research project into the activities of the Hillingdon Police Juvenile Bureau in several schools in Hillingdon. Division X in Hillingdon has three police officers involved in school liaison work. The research project investigated their activities in three schools working with 295 fourteen to sixteen year olds.

The police programme involved showing the children films or slides which dealt with topics ranging from general police duties across to specific questions such as shoplifting and child assault. These films or slides would then be used as a basis for discussion with the pupils about the topics concerned. On one occasion the children were invited out into the playground to inspect a police car, but the main focus of the activity was in the classroom.

The first question the researchers wanted to ask was 'What did the children learn from the police visits?' The answer, so far as knowledge of the law is concerned, is — **absolutely nothing.** The researchers distributed detailed questionnaires to the children who had been visited and to a large number of children who had not. What they found out was that in both cases there was a very low level of knowledge and those who had been visited knew just as little as those who had not.

'The sample as a whole did not know much about the law as measured by the test. Those pupils exposed to the programme did not seem to know a great deal more about the law than those with no exposure.'

Most teachers do attempt to develop an understanding of

the individual and their relationships to their civil liberties and the law.

The evidence of the Hillingdon Research findings indicate that the police are not the best people to do this.

First of all, the police are not disinterested parties. They are the prosecution in the vast majority of cases that come to court and, despite more cosmetic changes in Police and Criminal Evidence Act, will continue to be so. This is bound to influence their views on sentences. The researchers noticed that the police officers on the one hand wanted to promote a lenient view of the law and talked about giving first-time offenders a reasonable chance and so on, but at the same time complained constantly about the lightness of sentences handed out in the courts. In a country that is the top of the league of European countries for the size of its prison population and the severity of its sentencing that is a very partisan view indeed. And in fact, the police are the last people to be able to take an all-round view on such a question.

Secondly, police officers have no special expertise on the cases of the crimes and offences they deal with. One vivid part of the Hillingdon report describes police officers giving their views on baby-battering, which they strongly connected with single parent families and dirty neighbourhoods. In their description they referred to a part of town where they claimed the council had a special squad whose job it was to clean out filthy council houses. This caused considerable hostility on the part of a pupil who came from that part of town. They appeared to promote the idea that baby-batterers were immoral slum-dwellers to be treated with contempt. The causes of baby-battering are complex and an important part of teaching on the subject should presumably be directed at offering help to students who might find themselves in stressful situations with young children in future lives and who would need help.

As the researchers noted, 'the police exhibited a level of emotional reaction that would make it very difficult for any teenagers who might subsequently become child-abusing parents to face up to the problem effectively'.

So, as far as education is concerned, the report's findings were that the police were ineffective teachers, and suggested a number of reasons as to why this might be the case.

However, the researchers did find that there was one significant effect. The police visits did increase the student's respect for the police as an institution and strengthened their views on 'law and order'. The children who had been visited thought the police force should be strengthened and supported and that laws and penalties should be made tougher. This was a quite definite effect, whatever one may think of the validity of those opinions. However, the researchers found out that this effect was *completely cancelled out* by the behaviour of the police outside the school. No less than 52 of the students had been stopped and searched by the police in the streets and the majority of them had found the police threatening and rude. This is most instructive. Hillingdon is a fairly settled suburb in the stockbrokers' belt with a low rate of unemployment (just 6.1%) and social stress and a mainly white population. By and large the attitudes of all the teenagers interviewed (those who had not been visited by the police in school as well as those who had) were favourable to the police, and the schools were open and friendly to the police. But even there, any good the police did for their image was outweighed by their behaviour on the street. There could not be a neater and clearer demonstration of the rationale behind our policy on the police — the best thing the police can do to improve their image and increase respect for law and order is to change their own behaviour.

These Hillingdon findings are confirmed by the PSI report which pointed out the consistent stereotyping evidenced by police towards black people, women, homosexuals and trade unionists. They are the *least* suitable outside agency to be in regular contact with young people.



MULTI-AGENCY POLICING

The police policy towards schools and schoolchildren is part of a wider approach known as multi-agency policing. Multi-agency policing involves the incorporation of various social and welfare agencies into the policing process, supposedly to fight crime, but in reality to gather information on the community, whether it be by setting up neighbourhood watch schemes, consultation committees, or by police entering schools, youth clubs and tenants associations. Over the past year we have witnessed Hackney police undertake a massive public relations exercise to facilitate this approach. Juvenile Liaison Schemes are being set up all over London. The schemes will operate on panels and include representatives from the probation service, the youth service, education and welfare, and the police. The idea is that the police will present information to the panels, who will then decide whether to prosecute youths under 17 years old. This might sound fine on the face of it. But it needs to be stressed that the panels will bring more young people than ever into contact with the criminal justice system, *on the basis of police evidence*, and that they provide the opportunity for the cross-classifying of information on young people by all the various institutions involved. And that information is likely to end up stored on a police computer.

Young people are increasingly coming to be seen as a problem, to be controlled and managed by the police, and the

wider state apparatus; *they are being criminalised*. Recently, an article appeared in the *Hackney Gazette* blaming a mini-crime wave on the break up of schools for half term. Shopkeepers were warned by police to be on their guard against pickpockets; local residents were told burglaries and muggings were up. It was left to Hackney Schools Support Centre to point out that schools hadn't broken up for half term — it was absurd to blame children for increased crime. They came to the conclusion that 'local school children deserve an explanation and apology'.

Not surprisingly, no police apology was forthcoming. It has become commonplace to associate young people, especially young black people, with crime, to stereotype them as criminals and delinquents, and to blame all sorts of evil upon them. Horror stories of muggings and rape (largely carried out by black youth), vandalism and drug addiction (the afflictions of the white working class) regularly appear in the press. But when do we hear of, say, structural unemployment, racist policing, lack of facilities and life opportunities — the real problems facing the youth that led them to rebel against the system in 1981. In fact, multi-agency policing was fully put into practice as a response to the '81 uprisings and in the knowledge that the protest of black and inner city youth needed to be controlled and quelled.

SCHOOL AUTHORITIES AND POLICE

So far we have shown that the police abuse their powers of access to schools and threaten the civil liberties of children in doing so. We have also shown that there is *no educational value at all* to be had from a police presence in schools. So, in the light of this, what is the attitude of the authorities, both in the Department of Education and Science, and in the Inner London Education Authority, to the question of police in schools?

At the national level, the schools inspectorate carried out a survey of policing in schools and published their findings in a report called 'Police Liaison with the Education Service'. They compiled their report by writing to all the police forces in England and nearly all the 97 Local Education Authorities. *They made no inspection of police activities in schools at all*, but simply based their report on the opinions of the police and the Local Education Authorities. This is astonishing for a body with a team of inspectors at its disposal and which normally bases its reports on minute examination of what goes on in schools. The report points out that 'Every police force in England has some links with the education service', and it is in favour of these links. However, the report makes no attempt to distinguish between the educative and policing tasks of the police — we saw how this same problem came up in the Hillingdon Report — and the Inspectors are not in the slightest concerned about the potential difficulties; for example, they say at one point: 'Police forces generally attach considerable importance to the advantages to be gained through unofficial contact with schools. Home-beat officers "drop in" at school during break-time for a chat with pupils or teachers ... Most schools welcome and encourage this informal contact and may ask home-beat officers or juvenile bureau officers to have an

unofficial "word" with pupils or their parents, about whom they feel anxiety in relation to criminal activity.'

In the light of what we have noted before about the racism of the police and their irregular methods of questioning minors, the attitude of the schools inspectorate is stupid and uninformed.

However, this report has clearly influenced the Inner London Education Authority.

The Department of Education and Science produced a policy document in April 1983 which expressed whole hearted support for all kinds of co-operation with the police and which explicitly said that schools should hand over to the police any information on children they might require. At that time the ILEA supported the policy and instructed their Heads to co-operate with the police. This year the ILEA had produced an anti-racist policy. They have produced extensive documents in support of their policy and asked all schools to actively implement it. However, in their policy, *they have nothing to say about the police*. And yet, as we have shown and many others agree, the police themselves are racist and are one of the main instruments of racial oppression of black people. Yet the ILEA is able to ignore them in its anti-racist policy documents.

There have been some developments. A working party of ILEA Officers, Headteachers and Police (the CRE were originally involved but they withdrew) have met to re-consider policy. The ILEA have produced a new policy document which instructs schools *not* to divulge pupils' personal records to the police without a court order. However, the ILEA have yet to take a stand on the well-known racist nature of the police or against their access to schools for 'educational' purposes.

CYCLING PROFICIENCY TEST?



THE PRESENT SITUATION IN HACKNEY

There is something of a stalemate between the police and schools in Hackney. The police, in line with their neighbourhood policing policy, want to get into the schools, and the NUT have a policy of keeping them out. The police use every possible opportunity to make their presence felt in the schools and, it has to be admitted, wherever the NUT are not actively enforcing their policy, the police take the opportunity to come into the schools. It is therefore very important that teachers and parents continue the campaign and make sure it is implemented.

In early 1984, the police tried a new tactic in Hackney. They realised that if the police could not get into the schools then they would have to get the schools to come to them. They organised two open days at Hackney Police station in May. The various branches of the Hackney police force mounted displays: Mounted Branch, Dog Section, River Police, CID/Fingerprints branches, Traffic Patrol and so on. They also laid on displays by the 'Police Cadet Adventure Training Unit', the First Aid section and organised a game for visiting school children to 'play Sherlock Holmes' in a specially constructed 'Serious Crime' scene.

A series of displays organised in this way is obviously likely to be attractive to some young people as it highlights the adventurous 'crimebusting' aspect of police work. At such a display the police will gloss over the fact that they only have a 12% clean up rate for crime in Hackney. Nor will they mention the work of the Immigration Unit, the Special Control Group, the Intelligence Gathering Unit and all the other branches which exist to make life a misery for the people of Hackney.

Prior to these open displays, the Headteachers of local schools were asked along to Stoke Newington Police Station to discuss how to arrange the event. The Hackney Teachers Association arranged a picket outside the police station to try to persuade the Headteachers not to attend the meeting. In the event only seven Headteachers responded to the police invitation and only four were prepared to cross the picket line. So the meeting was not a success. This shows us that where we organise we can stop these activities.

It is vital for us to get our message home — we are *not* against policing: we *are* against drunken policing, racist

policing and corrupt policing. At the time of writing this pamphlet, the Hackney newspapers have been full of praise for a young constable who injured his back after falling through the roof of a local mortuary chasing a suspect. Just the heroic cops and robbers stuff that Hackney Police Station wants us to applaud. But what is the reality? A letter from T. Hurley of the Hackney Police Monitoring Group to the *Hackney Gazette* describes the incident:

'... At approximately 9pm many Hackney residents will have witnessed a helicopter flying over their rooftops, spinning round in circles and making a hell of a noise. The mortuary near the Lower Clapton Road was surrounded by police. Some people on their way home, expressed misgivings as to the nature of this operation.

Eventually the police presence around the mortuary seemed to ease, but at approximately 11pm their presence escalated yet again. A youth appeared on the rooftop. Many people around the scene felt disturbed at the attitude the police now adopted. *They began to throw stones.* [Our emphasis.] At this stage, to our knowledge, no attempt was made to reason with the boy — or to ask him to come down. Then PC Mark Fridham and the other officers decided to risk life and limb by climbing onto the roof, which could not, if they had reflected, bear their weight. When PC Pridham fell, other officers got visibly aggressive and were heard to shout. One eye-witness, deeply disturbed by the racist remarks being made, made a complaint there and then.

Was this massive operation, all at the ratepayers' expense, justified in the fight against crime? What horrendous crime had this boy committed to justify it? Many observers would verify that when the youth was taken from the roof he was too petrified to speak — hardly the behaviour of a hardened criminal...

The police are currently organising a series of disco-dance contests involving pupils from different schools in Hackney and getting reports of these printed in the local paper. However, as long as the police continue to behave in the ways we have illustrated in this pamphlet we will refuse to co-operate with them, and this includes opposing all their cosmetic exercises.

'X' is a sixteen-year old black person who has spent all his life in Hackney, and he is unimpressed with any claim to the effect that the local Police Force is not racist.

His first confrontation with the Hackney Police occurred when he was eleven. He had left his home to return to school when he was stopped and questioned by two Police Officers. They wanted to know where he had been, what he had been doing, and where he was going. He remembers their sarcastic and patronising manner: 'as if they are putting me in the wrong'. It is an approach that 'X' has come to expect, as he has been stopped and searched approximately fifteen times in the five years since the first incident.

Quite understandably, the first experience frightened him! It led him to become very wary of the Police, and his experiences have told him that his ordinary behaviour - for example, walking and standing - could be seen by the Police as questionable and suspicious. This is not the case with white people who do not face the same risk of being stopped and searched simply for being on a street.

I have worked with and spoken to countless young blacks in Hackney who have experienced the same problem as 'X' in their dealings with the local Police. The incidents do not have to be extreme to make the young black people feel that they are being treated unfairly by the Police; that they are being attacked by an openly hostile organisation. Therefore there seems to be obvious justification in the accusation that the Hackney Police Force is racist. It declares itself to be so every time it harrasses somebody like 'X', and there are plenty of young people in the local schools like him.

By a Hackney Teacher

DATE: 10th October 1984

TIME: Morning - before break

PLACE: George Orwell School, Holland Walk site (Archway)

Incident involving black 5th year pupil.

He was agitated when he came in in the morning from home. Went into assembly, something upset him, he started throwing chairs around - one at the window which broke the glass. Then he went up to the top floor of the building where he was pacing up and down.

Head says ambulance man called police. 1 police car and 1 police van arrived - more than six with riot shields. Pupil arrested and taken to hospital - not charged. (Assumed he was on LSD - don't know where assumption came from but doctors found no trace of drugs).

Mother had been phoned and was on her way but didn't wait for her to talk to him.

Witnesses say:

1 witness "not out of control - he was calming down"
2nd " " "more than 5 police appeared on corridor some with riot shields"

Just before arrest witnesses saw pupil "put hands up" and heard him say "Don't hit me, I don't want trouble". During arrest 1 eye witness saw "policeman kick and punch him".

Another (staff witness) "police twisted arm so hard that witness said to police "do you have to twist it so hard".

Also "6 or 7 big policemen, not the right way to handle a schoolboy"

Attitude of police: staff witness overheard police say "What do you expect from the Animal Farm"

"This is what happens when you take drugs"

Justification of police for riot shields: cause less harm to person involved and to policeman!

FROM OUR POSTBAG . . .



METROPOLITAN POLICE

CITY ROAD POLICE STATION
4 & 6 SHEPHERDESS WALK, LONDON, N1 7LP
Telephone 01-488 5212 (Switchboard)
01-488 (Direct)

Your ref.:

Our ref.:

TW/GN

21st October 1985

Dear Sir/Madam

Police and Hackney Schools

You will be aware of the disturbing document issued by the Hackney Teachers' Association of the National Union of Teachers. As the Police Community Liaison Officer of the Borough of Hackney and responsible for police involvement in Hackney's Schools, I feel obliged to comment on the spurious allegations contained in that document.

I will not attempt to cover every point made in the document but will confine myself to a general statement and one or two specific points. The document highlights occasional examples of individual police officers insensitive actions, exaggerates them out of all proportion and makes sweeping generalisations which are entirely without foundation. I refute totally the allegation that the Police Force is racist. In any organisation the size of the Metropolitan Police there will be occasional examples of misconduct. None of us are perfect and mistakes will occur in the most disciplined of organisations.

We are not, however, complacent and continue to strive for better performance. Our recruitment, training, operations and supervision have all been examined in an effort to improve our performance and we will continue to strive to give a better service to the public.

The allegation that Police "gather intelligence in schools", is, I know of particular concern to some teachers and parents. It is, of course, totally untrue. If one examines the question logically what intelligence could be gathered in the classroom? The Police objective is to prevent crime particularly when it prejudices the young.

Cont./...

2.

All visits by police to schools are made at the request of teachers and invariably teaching staff are present during police involvement with school children on school premises. The only complaint we receive from the 95% of London's Schools that we visit regularly is an occasional one of inexperience of the Constable as a teacher. This we are attempting to remedy by sending our officers on I.L.E.A. training courses.

It appears to me that both the Police and members of the teaching profession are vulnerable to those who are all too ready to exploit acute social problems underlying our mutual difficulties, for purely sectional and divisive purposes. Scurrilous attacks on Police and other establishment agencies are becoming the norm in some areas. I wish to assure you, your teaching staff and parents that our motives in talking to children in schools are purely and simply to make the children aware of the role of the Police in society and make them aware of the physical dangers that surround them, such as child molesters, drug abuse, and the like.

I and my staff would be most pleased to discuss this or any other policing matter with you. I assure you of our best attention at all times.

Yours sincerely

Terence WALTER
Chief Inspector
Community Liaison Officer
'G' District



METROPOLITAN POLICE
CITY POLICE STATION
100 MARK LANE
LONDON E1 1EN

Dear Sir,

I am writing to you in response to your letter of the 12th inst. regarding the matter of the missing person, Mr. John Smith, who was reported missing on the 10th inst. I am sorry to hear that you have not yet received any news of him.

Our officers are currently conducting a search for Mr. Smith, and we are hopeful that we will locate him soon. We are also conducting a search for any information that might help us identify him.

We are sorry that we cannot provide you with more information at this time, but we are doing everything we can to find Mr. Smith as quickly as possible.

Yours faithfully,
Inspector J. K. Smith

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